

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Tracking customers is easier in cyberspace than in the brick-and-mortar world. Unfortunately, customer traffic through a website cannot be readily observed. In the systems, methods and data visualization metaphors of this invention, one or more instrumentation techniques are used to capture website activity data in real-time. This website activity data is provided to an aggregation subsystem that stores hits matching monitored web pages into one or more contexts. Each context is implemented as one or more independent data structures that contain configuration information and that are usable to capture and store hit data for web pages that are relevant to the monitoring task.. The stored hit data is visualized using any one of a number of different visual metaphors, such as a "floor-and-back wall" visualization metaphor. In various exemplary embodiments of this visualization metaphor, distinct portions of the context are organized as "aisles" on the "floor" of a 3-dimensional space. The website activity, such as, for example, hits on monitored pages, is displayed as 3-dimensional objects whose height represents the amount of website activity for a current "tick". Previous values of the website activity are shown as 2-dimensional graphs that "tail" from the 3-dimensional objects. Movement by visitors between monitored web pages is visualized by transferring 3-dimensional objects between source and destination objects that represent the number of visitors leaving one page for another page. A back wall of the 3-dimensional space is used to display graphical data, such as flow graph charts, graphs, and/or pie charts.